

Dinner Party One

Menu

Starter: tomates crevettes

From Arlon to Ostende, from Liège to Mons and passing by Brussels, tomates crevettes are a Belgian specialty as well known as its famous moules frites. This popular dish is nothing more than an uncooked tomato filled with a shrimp-based stuffing.

Dinner: Belgian endives and/or leek with ham & cheese

This is a typical Belgian dish! The endives and/or leeks are pre - cooked & enfolded in ham slices. Then they are placed into an oven dish & submerged in a lovely cheese sauce. Grated cheese is put on top. In the last stage, the dish will be put under the grill. Usually, it is served with mash.

Dessert: Tiramisu

Tiramisu, literally "pick me up", is a popular Italian dessert. It is made of ladyfingers dipped in coffee, layered with a whipped mixture of egg yolks and mascarpone, and flavored with liquor and cocoa.

Tomates Crevettes

Recipe: For 4 persons

Ingredients

4 big meat tomatoes
400 gr cooked and peeled shrimps
2 el chopped parsley

*For the mayonnaise:

1 tablespoon of mustard
1 egg yolk
pepper and salt
2 tablespoons of azijn
juice of 1 lemon
500 ml salad oil

Recipe

1. Mix the egg yolk, the mustard, pepper and salt and lemon juice. Then add the salad oil in small quantities while mixing until you get a stiff mixture.
2. Boil the tomatoes for 2 minutes in hot water and skin them. Slice off the top and take the flesh out of the tomatoes
3. Mix the mayonnaise with the shrimps, parsley and tomato flesh. Fill up the tomatoes with this mixture
4. Put the caps of tomatoes on top and serve with a bit of salad.

Belgian endives and/or leek with ham & cheese

Recipe: For 2 very hungry persons, with seconds

Ingredients

6 large pieces of Belgian endives

6 slices of defatted cooked ham

65 gr grated Gruyère cheese

*For the mash:

floury potatoes for 2 persons, with seconds, peeled & cut up into 2 & put into cold water

Liquid margarine or butter

a splash of milk

black pepper

Maldon sea salt

fresh nutmeg, grated

*For the cheese sauce:

45 gr flour

45 gr butter or baking margarine / I use baking margarine, in the liquid form

450 ml of semi - skimmed milk

100 gr of grated Gruyère cheese

Maldon sea salt

Black pepper

Fresh nutmeg, grated

Recipe

5. Take a large cooking pot & fill with hot water. Put the lid on & bring to the boil on high heat. Wash the endives. Drain.
6. When the water is boiling, add the endives. Cook until cooked through. In my case, that was 25 minutes. Turn the heat off. Drain the endives thoroughly. Shake off the excess of water.
7. Take a chopping board & put 3 slices of ham on it. Take a piece of cooked endive & roll it up. The endive is now enfolded in the ham. Do the same with all the remaining slices.
8. Take a large oven dish & place the 6 pieces nicely together, side per side.
9. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
10. 6. Take a medium sized cooking pot & heat up on medium high. When hot, add the butter or baking margarine & let it melt. When melted, add the same amount of flour. Whisk

thoroughly & vigorously. Now, let the mix of flour & butter get a bit browned for a few minutes, to take away that floury flavor.

11. Add gradually the milk to the mix & whisk, whisk, whisk! Adjust the heat if necessary.
12. Add the 100 gr of grated cheese to the thicker sauce. Whisk. Turn the heat off. Season to taste with the sea salt, black pepper & the grated nutmeg. It has to taste real good!
13. Now, pour the Béchamel cheese sauce over the enfolded endives. Pour everything in & smooth the surface. The ham slices have to be covered by the sauce.
14. Scatter the rest of the grated cheese, the 65 gr on top, evenly divided.
15. Place into the preheated oven on 180 °C for 20 minutes. Then for an extra 5 minutes, place the dish under the grill.
16. While the dish is in the oven, take the large cooking pot you have used before & fill with hot water. Bring to the boil. When boiling, add the cut up potatoes. Boil until tender. In my case that was 20 minutes. Drain. Turn the heat off. Mash. Season to taste. I used Maldon sea salt & grinded black pepper, a splash of milk, a bit of liquid margarine & a bit of freshly grated nutmeg. Keep warm.
17. Put a piece of baked endives on a plate & serve with the mash. Spoon the sauce on top!

Tiramisu

Recipe: For 6 persons

Ingredients

4 eggs separated
500 g mascarpone cheese
2 cups heavy cream/double cream
30 sponge fingers/savoiardi/lady's fingers
8 tbs + 2 tbs sugar
2 cups strong coffee
2 tsp vanilla essence
2 tbs cocoa powder

Recipe

1. Prepare 2 cups of coffee by adding boiling water to 2 tbs of coffee+2 tbs of sugar. Keep it aside.
2. Separate egg whites and yolks.
3. In a glass bowl, take egg yolks and add in sugar beat well with the egg beater until you get creamy and pale yellow mixture (*zabaglione* pronounced as *sabayon*).
4. Place another vessel on the stove and add hot but not boiling water and set it on low-medium flame. Place the glass bowl with egg yolk and sugar mixture (*zabaglione*) over the simmering water and whisk well for around ten minutes until the mixture gets thick. Add vanilla essence to this and keep it aside to cool. (N.B: It is important to note that the bowl containing *zabaglione* should not come in contact with the water underneath since this will curdle the egg and get a grainy mixture. Also it is important not to use a metal bowl for preparing *zabaglione* since the vessel gets heated up quickly and again the egg will get curdled.)
5. Whip the Cream until peaks form and keep it aside. Don't whip it for too long because it will start forming into butter. You can use wire whisk or egg beater for this.
6. Mix the mascarpone cheese in this whipped cream and mix well until no lumps appear. Add the cooled *zabaglione* to this and mix well.
7. Whip the egg whites until peaks form and fold into the cheese and cream mixture to keep it light and airy. Don't over mix it..
8. Now take a large clear glass dish, just dip the sponge fingers in the coffee and layer them side by side until you cover the bottom of the dish with the sponge fingers dipped in

coffee. Don't keep the sponge fingers in coffee for long time since they tend to absorb liquid too quickly. Just dab both sides in coffee and that should be more than enough.

9. Pour half of the cheese cream mixture over this lady's fingers and again layer another layer of *savoirdi* dipped in coffee over this cream mixture and tip over the rest of cream mixture.
10. Cover and Refrigerate for minimum of 2 hours.
11. Just before serving, dust with cocoa by passing it through sieve or if you want to make it more rich, add some chocolate shavings....

Dinner Party Two

Menu

Starter: melon and serrano ham

Melon and Serrano ham are a popular Spanish tapas combination. The sweetness of the melon and slight saltiness of the ham complement each other very well. This dish is very refreshing in the summer and tremendously healthy.

Dinner: Belgian chicken fricassee

This delicious, cream y chicken fricassee is a classic Belgian recipe. Its Flemish name is “Koninginnenhapje” which could be translated as “Queen’s Nibble”.

Dessert: Homemade Brussels waffles with whipped cream, hot chocolate and strawberries

The Belgian waffle is a type of waffle identified by its larger size, lighter batter and higher grid pattern which forms deep pockets and has larger squares. In Belgium there are a number of different types of waffles, including the Brussels waffle; what is known in North America as the “Belgian waffle” is most similar to the Brussels waffle.

Although originally showcased in 1985 at Expo 58, Belgian waffles were popularized in the United States during the 1964 New York World’s fair at Flushing Meadows Park. The waffle was introduced by Maurice Vermeersch of Brussels, Belgium. The waffles were served with whipped cream and strawberries, and retailed for a dollar.

melon and parma ham

Recipe: For 6 persons

Ingredients

12 Ripe honeydew melons
12 parma ham slices
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 ½ tablespoon wholegrain mustard
1 ½ tablespoon clear honey
1 ½ tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 cup of walnuts

Recipe

1. Put the melon in the refrigerator a few hours before making this recipe. The melon has to be cold, as this is a summer dish
2. In a small bowl, mix together the olive oil, mustard, honey and lemon juice. Season with a little salt and black pepper.
3. Cut the melon into four quarters and then cut each quarter into five slices.
4. chop or crunch the walnuts.
5. Fan the slices out on to the plates. Arrange the Parma ham alongside. Sprinkle with the dressing and the crunched walnuts.

Belgian chicken fricassee

Recipe: serving 8 people

Ingredients

500 g chicken breast or 1 whole chicken

1l chicken stock

300 ml full fat milk

300 g beef mince

200 ml cream

200 g small mushrooms

100 g flour

100 g butter

1 egg yolk

Juice of 1 lemon

freshly chopped parsley

Salt and pepper

8 puff pastry pie shells

200 g of mixed salad

120 g of baby tomatoes

Recipe

1. boil the chicken for one and a half hour in the chicken stock until tender (30-45 minutes)
2. mix the egg yolk and the cream.
3. Make tiny balls with the beef mince, roll them in flour and cook in the chicken stock until they start to float. This usually takes a few minutes.
4. Melt the butter and mix it with the flour. Use this mixture as the base for the béchamelsauce. Keep the pot on medium heat. Then, very gradually, add splashes (think 2-3 tablespoons) of chicken stock to this mixture. Each time you added some stock, stir very well so that the mixture doesn't become lumpy. Add the milk. Make a sauce that is somewhat thicker than cream. Let boil for a couple of minutes.
5. Stir fry the mushrooms on medium heat until they start to sweat. Season with pepper and salt.
6. Add the chopped mushrooms, the meatballs, the boiled chicken in bite-sized pieces

and some lemon juice to the béchamelsauce. Add some salt and pepper. Put on low heat.

7. Add the cream.
8. Putt the pie shells in a preheated over for 5 min on 200 degrees.
9. Serve with small salad.

Belgian waffles

Recipe: For 6 persons (6-8 waffles)

Ingredients

1 cup all-purpose flour
3/8 cup sugar
1 ½ cup baking powder
1 egg, separated
1 cup milk
½ cup butter, melted
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
200 g good quality (Belgian) dark chocolate (70% cocoa solids)
200 g strawberries

Recipe:

10. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, and baking powder.
11. In another bowl, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form.
12. In yet another bowl, lightly beat egg yolks and then add milk, butter, and vanilla, mixing well. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold egg whites into batter.
13. Bake in a pre-heated waffle iron until golden brown.
14. Place the dark chocolate in a heatproof bowl and sit it over a pan of gently simmering water, making sure the water doesn't touch the base of the bowl. Leave to slowly melt, stirring occasionally.
6. Serve warm with whipped cream, vanilla ice and the melted chocolate sauce and strawberries.